

IN THE CLAIMS

1. A gas-liquid contacting tray comprising:
a bubble area; and,
one or more rectangular downcomers each having a length and a width wherein the length is longer than the width, and an upper and lower end, wherein each downcomer shares two boundaries with the bubble area along the length comprising:
two sloped downcomer walls along the length;
a downcomer opening at tray level; and,
one or more downward directed liquid discharge openings at its lower end;
wherein the downcomers are so positioned on the tray that the bubble area is present along the length, wherein the cross-sectional area at the lower end of the downcomer is less than about 40% of the cross-sectional area of the upper end of the downcomer at tray level.

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for pointing out the necessity of the IDS and submission of the references. Accordingly, an IDS has been submitted listing the foreign references and the non-patent literature reference and copies have been included.

The abstract was objected to due to use of legal phraseology. Appropriate amendments have been made and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

Drawings have been required for this application. Applicants have included proposed drawings for the Examiner's approval as well as corresponding description for the specification. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1 - 5, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by WO 99/12621 ('621). For a prior art reference to anticipate a set of claims, each and every limitation of the claims must be disclosed in that reference. *Glaxo v. Novopharm*, 34 USPQ2d 1565 (Fed. Cir. 1995). Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that bubble area is present on both of the longer sides of the downcomer. The tray of Figure 9 of the '621 reference discloses three downcomers: two upstream downcomers and one downstream downcomer formed by the upstream downcomers. None of these downcomers have bubble area present on both of the longer sides, therefore the '621 reference does not anticipate the